

Analytical Study on Family Support in Reducing Examination Stress at Secondary Level

Lopamudra Mishra¹, Dr. Shubhra Nath²

¹Research Scholar, Department of Education, RKDF University, Ranchi, Jharkhand, India

²Research Supervisor, Department of Education, RKDF University, Ranchi, Jharkhand, India

ABSTRACT

Examinations are always associated with large amounts of stress that they bring along and have a huge impact on the psyche of the children facing them, with the changes of puberty multiplying their difficulties. It is a situation of 'perform or perish' which also sets the parents into action trying to bring the best out of their wards adding to piquant situation and increasing the stress. Therefore in this regard the family can play a significant role in curbing the stress level of their little angels during the exam times. When stress is left unchecked and unmanaged, it creates problems in performance and affects the health, well-being and emotional intelligence of an organism. Therefore the supportive role of parents or family act as a booster to cope with examination stress. The suggestive measure were parents were also discussed in the study.

KEYWORDS: Examination Stress, Family Support, Secondary level, Coping Method

How to cite this paper: Lopamudra Mishra | Dr. Shubhra Nath "Analytical Study on Family Support in Reducing Examination Stress at Secondary Level"

Published in International Journal of Trend in Scientific Research and Development (ijtsrd), ISSN: 2456-6470, Volume-7 | Issue-3, June 2023, pp.1216-1223, www.ijtsrd.com/papers/ijtsrd58597.pdf



IJTSRD58597

URL:

Copyright © 2023 by author (s) and International Journal of Trend in Scientific Research and Development Journal. This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY 4.0) (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0>)



1. INTRODUCTION

We are living in the competitive and fast-paced society in which an individual makes his/her way in success ladder through painstaking cut throat competition. The ever-increasing cutthroat environment has put a great deal of weight on present human being. The various demands and strains of modern world have made the individual restless and apprehensive about the future. The phase of adolescence marking a transition in the student's life from middle to secondary and to senior secondary school opens a plethora of stressful situations more so in the academic front. Examination, being the major one, where the adolescent predominantly feels a sense of pressure, others being unhealthy competition, indecisiveness in stream selection and the like. All this lead to stress that manifests itself in the behavioral changes exhibited by the adolescents. Examinations are always associated with large

amounts of stress that they bring along and have a huge impact on the psyche of the children facing them, with the changes of puberty multiplying their difficulties. It is a situation of 'perform or perish' which also sets the parents into action trying to bring the best out of their wards adding to piquant situation and increasing the stress. Therefore in this regard the Parents can play a significant role in curbing the stress level of their little angels during the exam times. As we, all know that human beings always need some sort of help or support from their known ones so that they can feel secure and assured. This is especially true in the case of students because due to excessive stress, they become susceptible. The study's recommendations have important implications for researchers, educators, and students. As a result, the research has important implications for society.

1.1. Conceptual Framework of the Study

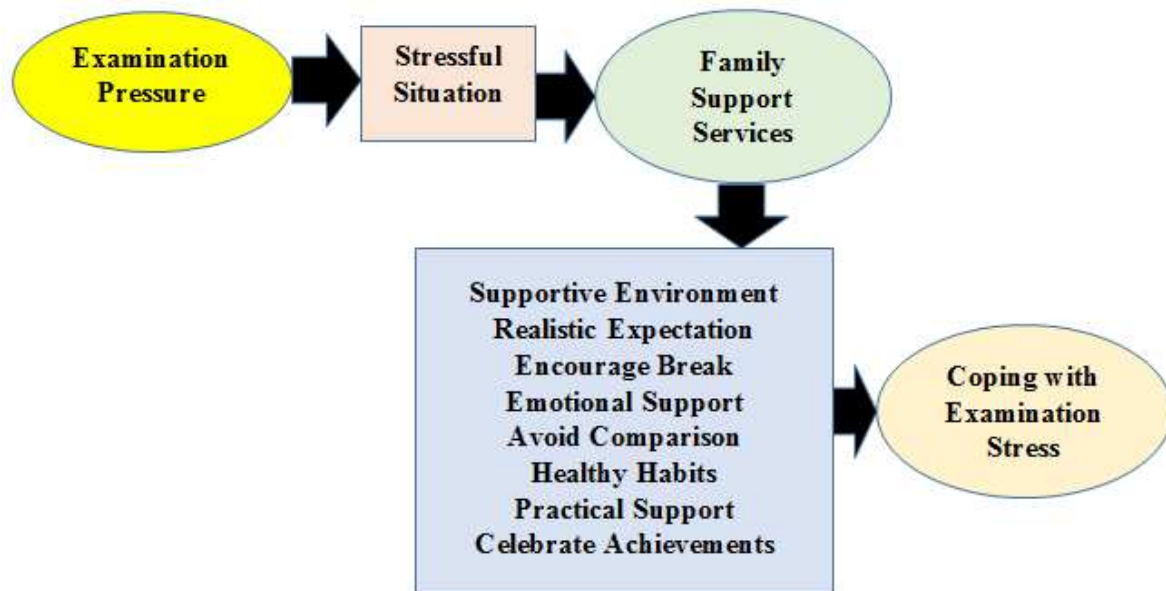


Figure 1.1: Showing Conceptual Framework of the Study
Source: Made by the Investigator

Parents, adult family members, and siblings add considerably to various components of personality of the child particularly and in dealing with various types of stresses encountered by the child. The pivotal role of parents still continues as it has been recognized by the teachers and parents themselves that they are essential for complete development of the personality and career of their children. Gonzalez- Pienda, et al., (2002) indicated that “without the children's parental support, it is hard for teachers to devise academic experiences to help students learn meaningful content” (p.281). In home settings, the learning processes occur overtly or consciously, often in an informal way. Parents teach and train children early in their lives, the fundamental skills, attitudes and values necessary for day-to-day living (UNESCO, 1992). The unwritten knowledge being conveyed by parents to their children is specific and to a certain degree, specialized, i.e. that which would enable the children to cope successfully with the requirements of the immediate confines of homes and the community. The family provide various support services like supportive environment, realistic expectation, encourage break, emotional support, avoid comparison, healthy habits, practical support, and celebrating the achievements will act as a booster. Thus the study's goal is to illuminate the dynamics at play in the Examination stress is a common issue that many students face, and parents can play a crucial role in helping their children cope with it.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

The present study is entitled as “Role of Family Support in Reducing Examination Stress at Secondary Students.”

1.3. Objectives of the Study

The following aims were included into the study's design:

1. To find out the nature of examination stress at secondary level.
2. To study the reasons of examination stress at secondary level.
3. To determine the role of family support in combating the examination stress at secondary level.

2. Review of Related Literature

- **Kataria, Khusboo. (2019).** Relationship between Parental Support and Examination Anxiety among Secondary School Students. *International Journal of Creative Research Thoughts*, 7(2), 79-86. Descriptive survey method was used in this study to obtain pertinent and precise information. The objectives of the study was to study the relationship between parental support and examination anxiety among secondary school students to analyze the relationship between examination anxiety and parental support of secondary school students. The results of the study revealed that no significant correlation between Parental Support and Academic anxiety.
- **Egbadon, F. E., Aluede, O. O., Ojugo, A. I., & Fajoku, S. A. (2016).** Examination anxiety among secondary school students in Edo State, Nigeria. *Nigerian Journal of Guidance and Counselling*, 21(1), 34-46. The study recommended, among others, that government should adapt a new approach to testing that will focus on evaluating students through progress report that describe their efforts, achievements, strengths and

- [illegible]

Page 1218

2.1. Research Gap

The word cloud visual display stated that the anxiety with the highest word frequency of 129, followed by students 104, examination with 82 and parental support with 72. The visual analysis depicted that examination anxiety or stress were highest among students where role of parents were essential to reduce which were proved by the above studies. The majority of studies that have been conducted deal with the coping of stress either for college students or for children. While none of the studies have addressed the reducing of examination stress at secondary level. Therefore the researcher select the title as “Analytical Study on Family Support in Reducing Examination Stress at Secondary Level.”

3. Methodology of the Study

The study is qualitative in nature where analytical design has been used by the investigator to understand the investigation of this occurrence. It is a specific type of research that involves critical thinking skills and. the evaluation of facts and information relative to the research being conducted.

4. Analysis and Interpretation

4.1. Pertaining to Objective 1

O₁: To find out the nature of examination stress at secondary level.

Every time we hear about a student committing suicide in India, we assume failure in some exams to be the cause. Students preparing for exams often feel under pressure. The pressure may result in feelings of anxiety or nervousness, and this exam stress can interfere with the individual's daily life. While a certain amount of stress may be beneficial, too much exam stress can cause individuals to perform poorly on tests that mean so much to them. Learning the causes of exam stress can help students to understand their emotions and to regulate their anxiety level. According to the **National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB)**, in the five years leading to 2015, 39,775 students killed themselves. The number of attempted suicides, many be unreported, is likely to be much higher. India has one of the world's highest suicide rates for youth aged 15 to 29, according to a 2012 Lancet report, which illustrated the need for urgent interventions for this demographic. The physical factor can lead to trauma, injury, sickness, etc. while emotional stress gives rise to anxiety and tension. Examination stress can lead to headache, Insomnia, Loss of appetite, loss of concentration, panic attacks, Self-harming behaviour and Depression. Every student has always attempted to maintain a good standard so as to satisfy their school authority and parents. This conscious creates frustrations especially when students are unable to meet these objectives. **As Thompson & Gunter (2006)** revealed, stress is non-specific responses of the adaptation to any demand i.e. all human beings may adapt to the physiological response to stress in three reactions:

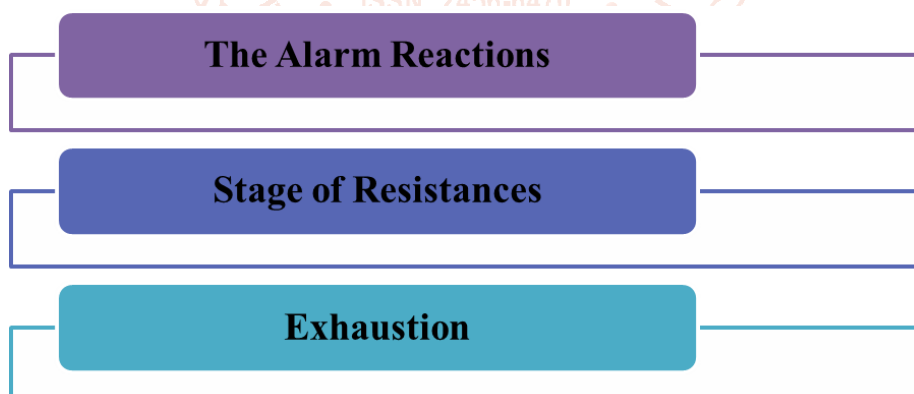


Figure 4.1: Showing Physiological Response to Stress in Three Reactions

Source: Made by the Investigator

- **The Alarm Reactions:** The alarm reaction stage refers to the initial symptoms the body experiences when under stress. You may be familiar with the “fight-or-flight” response, which is a physiological response to stress. This natural reaction prepares you to either flee or protect yourself in dangerous situations. Your heart rate increases, your adrenal gland releases cortisol (a stress hormone), and you receive a boost of adrenaline, which increases energy. This fight-or-flight response occurs in the alarm reaction stage.
- **Stage of Resistances:** It has to do with increase in the capacity for the organization to respond. After the initial shock of a stressful event and having a fight-or-flight response, the body begins to repair itself. It releases a lower amount of cortisol, and your heart rate and blood pressure begin to normalize. Although body enters this recovery phase, it remains on high alert for a while. If one overcome stress and the situation is no longer an issue, our body continues to repair itself until your hormone levels, heart rate, and blood

pressure reach a pre-stress state. Some stressful situations continue for extended periods of time. If one don't resolve the stress and your body remains on high alert, it eventually adapts and learns how to live with a higher stress level. In this stage, the body goes through changes that we are unaware of in an attempt to cope with stress.

- **Exhaustion:** It is characterized by the loss of functional capability to continue. This stage is the result of prolonged or chronic stress. Struggling with stress for long periods can drain your physical, emotional, and mental resources to the point where your body no longer has strength to fight stress.

The tension and strain experienced by individuals be it in their homes, in their schools have been proved as the by-product of stress by many psychologists. **Aherne (2001)** Executive stress and its management emphasized that stress occurs when nervous tension reaches a degree of intensity that interferes with normal physiological process in the body. He looked at these as a perceived substantial imbalance between demands and responses capability under the condition where failure to meet demands has important or perceived consequences. However, this research work is concerned with physical sources of stress. As **Hall et al. (2004)** further explained the physical sources of stress are further classified into Primary or Direct and Secondary or Indirect stress.

The Primary or Direct stress which is the concern of this research work involves environmental adaptive capacities of the impositions, trauma or insults which directly strains or stresses the adaptive capacities of non-physiological system, excessive noise and heat are examples of such primary source of stress.

These issues discussed above are tentative non-definitive statement which can only be empirically validated. Therefore this present study is determined to know whether the referred to above are stressful, distressful or frustrating or get stressed out. It occurs when students feel anxious, overwhelmed, and worried about their performance on exams. This stress can be acute or chronic, and can have both physical and emotional symptoms.

- Feeling confused
- Losing touch with friends
- Feeling moody and low
- Having trouble making decisions
- Feeling overwhelmed
- Lack of motivation to do anything
- Trouble sleeping or getting out of bed
- Tense muscles or headaches
- Having an upset stomach or feeling sick
- Fidgeting, nail biting, teeth grinding.

Pestonjee (1999) noted that it is natural and healthy to maintain optimal levels of stress. When stress is left unchecked and unmanaged, it creates problems in performance and affects the health, well-being and emotional intelligence of an organism. **Singh (2011)** explored the relationship of anxiety and achievement in relation to their study habits. The results indicated that those students who have average anxiety level showed better study habits than the students who have high and low anxiety levels.

4.2. Pertaining to Objective 2

O₂: To identify the reasons of examination stress at secondary level.

According to **Abouserie (1994)**, Students suffering stress at each semester with the extreme sources of stress from taking exams, struggle for grade in exam, and the large amount of syllabus to study in a small amount of time. Meanwhile, study of **Erkutlu & Chafra (2006)**, revealed that, pressure to perform well in the examination and time allocated creates stressful situation among university students. **Zeidner (1987)** found that multiple choice type exams are more favorable than essay type questions in examination, by both boys and girls. It revealed that the content of exam paper also a factors to create examination stress among students. On the research of Sources of Academic Stress – A Study on Management Students of Prabhakar P.N and Gowthami .C stated that, pressure to get good grades through the exam was the cause of worry for about 50% of the students whereas around 40% were worried about sitting for the exam. Thus, examinations are the ostensible stressors for management students. **Takatsuji K & et al. (2008)** reported on their research as, the time of examinations is an ideal factor which creates mental stress in students. It is a common issue that many secondary level students face, and there can be several reasons for it. Here are some of the most common reasons:

- **Pressure to Perform:** Students often feel a great deal of pressure to perform well on their exams, which can cause stress and anxiety. This pressure can come from their parents, teachers, peers, and even from themselves.
- **Fear of Failure:** Many students are afraid of failing their exams, which can cause them to feel anxious and stressed. They may worry about the consequences of failing, such as disappointing their parents or not being accepted into their desired college or university.
- **Denscombe (2012)** suggested that examinations are stressful for this group of student for different reasons consequences such as markers of self-

esteem, judgements from others, and fear appeals by teachers.

- **Lack of Preparation:** Students who feel unprepared for their exams may experience stress and anxiety. They may worry about not knowing the material well enough, or not having enough time to study before the exam.
- **High Workload:** Secondary level students often have a high workload, with multiple exams and assignments to complete within a short period of time. This can cause stress and anxiety, as students struggle to manage their time effectively.
- **Uncertainty about the Future:** Secondary level students may feel uncertain about their future, especially if they are approaching the end of their school career. They may worry about their grades and how they will impact their future opportunities.
- **High Expectations:** Students may face high expectations from parents, teachers, or peers, which can cause pressure and stress. These expectations may be related to achieving high grades or performing well on standardized tests.
- **Time Management Issues:** Poor time management skills can lead to students feeling overwhelmed and stressed. They may struggle to balance studying with other responsibilities such as work or extracurricular activities. Putwain (2008) indicated how stress is also used as an umbrella term for any negative affect associated with examinations: time pressure, the exhaustion of having to sit multiple of examinations in a single day, having to prepare for exams while still completing coursework and the interference on relationships and social activities.
- **Perfectionism:** Students who are perfectionists may experience significant stress when it comes to exams. They may put a great deal of pressure on themselves to achieve perfect grades or results, leading to high levels of stress and anxiety.

4.3. Pertaining to Objective 3

O₃: To determine the role of family support in combating the examination stress at secondary level.

Parental involvement in the education of students begins at home with the parents providing a safe and healthy environment, appropriate learning experiences, support, and a positive attitude about school. Several studies indicate increased academic achievement with students that have involved parents (Epstein, 2009; Greenwood & Hickman, 1991; Henderson & Berla, 1994; Rumberger et al., 1990; Swap, 1993; Whitaker & Fiore, 2001). Studies also

indicate that parental involvement is most effective when viewed as a partnership between educators and parents (Davies, 1996; Emeagwali, 2009; Epstein, 2009). By examining parents' and teachers' perceptions, educators and parents should have a better understanding of effective parental involvement practices in promoting student achievement.

- **Create a Supportive Environment:** Parents can create a supportive and calm environment at home, which can help their children feel more relaxed and less stressed. This can involve ensuring that their children have a quiet space to study and providing them with healthy meals and snacks to keep their energy levels up. Family members can create a calm and quiet environment at home that is conducive to studying. This can involve minimizing distractions, such as loud noises or interruptions. When parental encouragement and student performance in school settings have been studied, other factors have been associated with academic performance and achievement among youth. These factors include motivation (Alfaro, et al. 2006), goal orientation (Dupeyrat and Marine 2005) and self- efficacy (Bandura 1997). Sharma et al. (2016) in their study have delineated various method for dealing with stress. These methods included exercise, time management, leisure activities etc. Also, the importance of conducive environment in reducing stress was stated. Change in the style of delivery from teachers end and providing mentors can also help in creating stress-free environment
- **Set Realistic Expectations:** Parents should set realistic expectations for their children and avoid putting too much pressure on them to achieve high grades. Encouraging their children to do their best and acknowledging their efforts can be more beneficial than focusing solely on grades.
- **Encourage Breaks:** Parents can encourage their children to take regular breaks during study sessions to avoid burnout. Taking short breaks to stretch, exercise or engage in other enjoyable activities can help to reduce stress and improve focus.
- **Provide Emotional Support:** It is important for parents to provide emotional support to their children during exam periods. This can involve listening to their concerns, offering words of encouragement and reassuring them that they are capable of handling the stress.
- **Avoid Comparisons:** Comparing their children to others can be damaging to their self-esteem and increase their stress levels. Parents should avoid

making comparisons and instead focus on their child's individual strengths and achievements.

- **Encourage Healthy Habits:** Family members can encourage students to develop healthy habits such as getting enough sleep, exercising, and eating nutritious meals. These habits can help students manage stress and stay focused.
- **Provide Practical Support:** Family members can provide practical support by helping with household chores or other responsibilities, so that students have more time to study. This can reduce the pressure and stress that students may feel when trying to balance their academic and personal responsibilities. Panda and Jena (2000) defined achievement motivation as an urge to improve or as a psychological factor which provides internal impetus to excellence.
- **Celebrate Achievements:** Family members can celebrate students' achievements, no matter how small they may seem. This can help to boost their confidence and reduce their stress levels.

5. Conclusion

Thus, role of parents in reducing stress is unavoidable and should not be ignored guiding on right and wrong belongings. Emotional support is very genuine and very important in life style of students. If the parents help the students for inculcating good habits, discipline they may reduce the examination stress. Parents must follow the above techniques then examination stress of students may reduce, and they can face happily to the examinations. Highlighting the need for mutual goal setting, participants wanted parents to consider their perspective and abilities to set goal. They will get success in their examination. The country will get the powerful human resources. The study has important theoretical as well as applied implications. The findings are relevant to the yields of education, parenting and counselling.

Reference

- [1] Adams, J. F. (2001). Impact of parent training on family functioning. *Child & Family Behavior Therapy*, 23(1), 29-42.
- [2] Agolla J.E, Ongori H. An Assessment of Academic Stress among Undergraduate Students: The Case of University of Botswana Educational Research and Review 2009; vol. 4(2), pp: 63-70. 2.
- [3] Ang RP, Huan VS. Academic Expectations Stress Inventory (AESI): development, factor analysis, reliability and validity. *Educational and Psychological measurement* 2006; vol. 66, pp: 522-539
- [4] Bornstein, M. H. (Ed.). (2002). *Handbook of parenting*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- [5] Busari AO. Stress Inoculation Techniques in Fostering Adjustment to Academic Stress among undergraduate Students. *British Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*.2011; vol. 2(1), pp: 229-243
- [6] Causey, D. L., & Dubow, E. F. (1992). Development of a self-report coping measure for elementary school children. *Journal of Clinical Child Psychology*, 21, 47–59
- [7] Desai & Sathiyaseelan. (2017). Parental Pressure and Test Anxiety: Threats to Students' Well Being. *Recent Advances in Psychology: An International Journal*, 4(1).
- [8] Driscoll, R. (2007). Westside Test Anxiety Scale Validation. Online Submission. Experts take aim at South Asia parents (2015, March 1). *Gulf News India*. Retrieved from <http://gulfnews.com/news/asia/india/experts-take-aim-at-south-asiaparents-1.1464587>.
- [9] Egbadon, F. E., Aluede, O. O., Ojugo, A. I., & Fajoku, S. A. (2016). Examination anxiety among secondary school students in Edo State, Nigeria. *Nigerian Journal of Guidance and Counselling*, 21(1), 34-46.
- [10] Hembree, R. (1988). Correlates, causes, effects, and treatment of test anxiety. *Review of educational research*, 58(1), 47-77.
- [11] Hill, K. T., & Wigfield, A. (1984). Test anxiety: A major educational problem and what can be done about it. *The Elementary School Journal*, 85(1), 105-126.
- [12] Kataria, Khusboo. (2019). Relationship between Parental Support and Examination Anxiety among Secondary School Students. *International Journal of Creative Research Thoughts*, 7(2), 79-86.
- [13] Kumar, Arun. & Midha, Punam. (2016). The Role of Educator & Parents in Management of Academic & Examination Stress of Student's. *The International Journal of Indian Psychology*.
- [14] Nair, M. (2014, November 27). Is Exam the sole factor causing stress among students in India? *Maps of India*. Retrieved from <http://www.mapsofindia.com/my-india/education/is-exam-the-sole-factor-causing-stressamong-students-in-india>.

- [15] National Crime Records Bureau (2016), Accidental Deaths & Suicides in India, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, New Delhi. Retrieved from <http://ncrb.nic.in/StatPublications/ADSI/ADSI2015/adsi2015-full-report.pdf>
- [16] Putwain, D. W. (2009). Assessment and examination stress in Key Stage 4. *British Educational Research Journal*, 35(3), 391-411.
- [17] Renk, K., & Smith, T. (2007). Predictors of academic-related stress in college students: An examination of coping, social support, parenting, and anxiety. *Naspa Journal*, 44(3), 405-431.
- [18] Singh, V. P. (2013). What every parent should know to reduce examination stress: some intervention strategies. *Educational Quest-An International Journal of Education and Applied Social Sciences*, 4(2), 155-165.
- [19] Wilks SE. Resilience and Academic Stress: The Moderating Impact of Social Support among Social Work Students. *Advances in Social Work*, 2008; vol.9 (2) pp: 106-125.

